

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
 NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
 OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES

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Investigation of:

MV ETHAN ALLEN,  
 LAKE GEORGE, NEW YORK,  
 OCTOBER 2, 2005

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\* Docket No.: DCA 06 MM 001

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Interview of: BRUCE KILBURN

National Transportation Safety Board  
 490 L'Enfant Plaza East, S.W.  
 Washington, D.C. 20594

Tuesday,  
 October 18, 2005

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to  
 notice, at 1:30 p.m.

BEFORE: MARIETTE BURER

## APPEARANCES:

MARIETTE BURER  
National Transportation Safety Board

MAJOR STEVE RIVENBURGH  
New York State Park Police

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:30 p.m.)

MS. BURER: All right. My name is Mariette Burer with the National Transportation Safety Board. Today is Tuesday, October 18th, and it's approximately 1330 in the afternoon.

I have with me Chief Kilburn. Go ahead and announced yourself.

CHIEF KILBURN: My name is Bruce Kilburn. I'm the Chief of Lake George Fire Department, Lake George, New York.

MS. BURER: Okay.

MAJOR RIVENBURGH: And this is Major Steve Rivenburgh, New York State Park Police.

Chief, could I ask you to spell your last name for me please?

CHIEF KILBURN: Sure. K I L B U R N.

MAJOR RIVENBURGH: Okay. Thank you.

CHIEF KILBURN: You're welcome.

MS. BURER: And that's with the Lake George --

CHIEF KILBURN: Lake George Fire Department.

MS. BURER: -- Fire Department.

Okay. This is in regards to the Ethan Allen accident that happened October 2nd.

INTERVIEW OF BRUCE KILBURN

BY MS. BURER:

1           Q.    Can you guide me through the events that occurred and  
2   how the whole incident unfolded and evolved, and tell me what  
3   your role was?

4           A.    Okay.  The -- we got the call approximately 14:57  
5   hours on October 2nd, which I responded to, and in response,  
6   well, they paged us that there were 50 patients in the water.  
7   So as I responded, I called Warren County and asked them to  
8   confirm the number of patients who I had thought they said 15,  
9   and the dispatcher come back on and said, no, it was 5 0, 50.  
10   That kind of got me wondering what was going on, and the  
11   location, well, it's originally came in as Green Harbor which  
12   is part of, I guess, Green Harbor is kind of a large area.  So  
13   I went down and checked Green Harbor where I know of Green  
14   Harbor, and saw nothing, and then was notified by my dive unit  
15   that the man post would be at Cramer Point which I responded to  
16   and I was on the scene approximately, oh, I'd say probably  
17   seven to eight minutes.  Upon my arrival, there was a Lake  
18   George ambulance there and an ambulance from Empire Medical  
19   Services were there, at which time they said that they had  
20   approximately 50 patients, and people were being transported  
21   into shore.  When I got there, the first people that came in, a  
22   gentleman hollered over to me and said I have three in trauma  
23   arrest.  So we had enough people right there at that point to  
24   try and take care of those three, and I instructed the  
25   ambulance crews to get their stretchers and their equipment to

1 get ready to work the three trauma arrests. The gentleman from  
2 Empire, who was kind of overseeing the people coming out of the  
3 boats, hollered and said there was four more in trauma arrest.  
4 Well, at that point we had seven. So therefore I called Warren  
5 County and requested more ambulances, personnel and resources  
6 to the scene. As the Chief, first on the scene, I was kind of  
7 the Incident Commander. So I had to kind of set up everything  
8 and get everything organized as best we could to -- with the  
9 number of people that we had and instruct some sort of triage  
10 system to, you know, prioritize our people that we had coming  
11 in as to, you know, salvageable and people who were not  
12 savable. Unfortunately it's a tough job but you have to do it.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Okay. My dive units also responded and Marine Rescue  
15 1. They got on the scene and also our dive truck, the divers,  
16 the boat came in and picked up our divers and went back out.  
17 They started to do what they could to recover the people that  
18 were obviously deceased and to get them in shore and get the  
19 other people on shore as well. The people that were on the  
20 scene in their own personal watercraft were, as they said, the  
21 true heroes in that sole scenario, ending up in there to help  
22 assist the people that were able to swim and get them into  
23 their boats and get them into shore. It probably would have  
24 been a lot worse. As far as the boat itself, I never really  
25 saw the Ethan Allen. I was, like I say, on the shore busy

1   trying to get organized as far as to, you know, patient care  
2   taken care of, and actually they started bringing the viable  
3   patients over to the far right and bringing the patients, other  
4   patients, the deceased patients into -- onto my left, the  
5   docks, where mostly everybody worked from in the next two days.

6   So that's pretty much my role of the whole thing. I was just  
7   trying to, like I say, being in charge of the instant command  
8   until the Sheriff's Department got there, and tinker around in  
9   the game and started doing what they had to do as far as trying  
10  to figure out what was going on and what had happened.

11       Q.   Were you instant commander, the IC, through the whole  
12  event or did you eventually turn it over to the Sheriff's  
13  Department?

14       A.   I, I eventually turned it over to the Sheriff's  
15  Department. I worked with them for a while, until we could  
16  verify that we had recovered everybody, that all the people  
17  that were on that tour were accounted for. That took some  
18  time. There was some confusion between the tour director and  
19  what they counted when they got on the boat, and just some, you  
20  know, misinformation there that later was cleared up when they  
21  got the total count of who was where, what persons were  
22  actually on the boat. At that point, the Sheriff's dive team  
23  had gotten there, and my guys had done their two dives. That's  
24  all they could do in 70 feet of water. We turned it over to  
25  the Sheriff's Department, and we kind of backed off and let

1 Sheriff Cleveland take it from there, and with the rest of the  
2 investigation and such.

3 Q. Okay. You -- when you mentioned the Sheriff's  
4 Department, who were you actually working with from the  
5 Sheriff's Department?

6 A. I was pretty much in face-to-face with Sheriff  
7 Cleveland. He had arrived on the scene by that time, and he  
8 and I kind of, you know, coordinated back and forth. I did  
9 talk to one of his deputies but he just wanted to triage, tag  
10 and some other things, so he could account for the people that  
11 had gone to the hospital. But pretty much everything else, as  
12 far as the accountability and everything else, I pretty much  
13 worked with Sheriff Larry Cleveland on that.

14 Q. Okay. And then do you recall when the actual  
15 incident was stopped?

16 A. The approximate time it stopped, I'm not really sure  
17 because the Sheriff's Department did stay there and dove on the  
18 Ethan Allen after we left.

19 Q. Right.

20 A. I'm not sure exactly what time we did get back to the  
21 station, but -- gee, I'm not really sure of the time without  
22 going back and looking at the -- at my run sheet. That would  
23 tell me the exact time we got back.

24 Q. Well, do you recall approximately at what time you  
25 actually handed everything over to the Sheriff's Department?



1           A.    I would say probably -- I'd say probably 6:00, 6:30  
2 maybe, somewhere in there. There again, like I said, I'm not  
3 really sure of the time without going checking my run sheet to  
4 make sure exactly what time that all did take place. I'm not  
5 really sure.

6           Q.    Right. Okay. When your dive team came along, do you  
7 know -- I'm actually asking for times, and I'm not really sure  
8 if you're able to provide that for me at this time, right,  
9 because of the fact that you don't have the run sheet in front  
10 of you?

11          A.    Yeah, it's kind of hard because our dive team was  
12 dispatched and in route I'd say probably around 15:00 hours.  
13 They were on the scene, I'm going to say, within 5 -- I'd say 7  
14 to 10 minutes at the most, they were on the scene. We all got  
15 off the floor pretty quick that day, and so I'm going to say  
16 probably a 10 minute time probably from 10 after 3:00,  
17 somewhere in there. They had to be on the scene by then  
18 without a problem.

19          Q.    And where were they coming from, the dive team?

20          A.    The divers, we responded with our dive van from the  
21 firehouse, and our dive boat responded from the Village of Lake  
22 George, the Courthouse Docks, just up from -- pretty much in  
23 the middle of town.

24          Q.    Okay. And then when they finally -- when they  
25 arrived on the scene, were other divers already at the scene or

1 were -- was it you two who were the first ones on the scene?

2 A. Well, from what I was told, there was a dive  
3 instructor doing a class at Hearthstone Beach or Park rather,  
4 and they responded over there. They were up -- they were on  
5 the scene I think before our divers were. I think they had  
6 gone down and brought some people up. That's secondhand  
7 information to me. I'm not really sure, but it seems to me one  
8 of my guys told me that when they got there, there was already  
9 other divers in the water, which would have to be Rich Morin's  
10 dive team, that he was doing a class, class over at Hearthstone  
11 Park. That's what I was told.

12 Q. Okay. How did you handle the whole triage situation?  
13 Can you explain that to me as far as how you set up the  
14 incident or the scene and how you divided it up and et cetera,  
15 communications with the hospital, communications with the  
16 ambulances?

17 A. Sure. Well, when I first got there, like I said, we  
18 started, you know, I started noticing the people that were  
19 obviously deceased. We started putting them to one side.  
20 Another gentleman came, our EMS coordinator, we have  
21 different -- or four different EMS coordinators. EMS Car 2 was  
22 there. I told him to take charge of triage and EMS, and he in  
23 turn took one of my other firefighters as his assistant. I  
24 instructed him that I had several ambulances coming, that they  
25 were staged up on Route 9, that he was to call them as they

1 needed them because of our access was not the best down there.  
2 One car in and one car out sort of thing, and so that all took  
3 place and the rest, I just kind of took care of as far as  
4 talking to my fire police, you know, to keep traffic away from  
5 the scene as much as they could up on Route 9N and other than  
6 that, they took care of pretty much the rest of the EMS,  
7 treating people, calling the ambulances in as they needed them,  
8 and I just kind of stayed in my position as, you know, making  
9 sure that people were, you know, the viable patients were taken  
10 to one location and taken care of, turned over to them, and  
11 then we just secured the area where the deceased people were  
12 covered with sheets and stuff. We put up a barrier curtain  
13 between the two places. So it kind of cut down the stress a  
14 little on the people that had survived. It was pretty much  
15 myself, the EMS and then they took -- the EMS took care of the  
16 transportation of the people to the hospital and what  
17 ambulances they went in and such. So I'm sure they have that  
18 information someplace.

19 Q. Okay. As far as actual communication, are you doing  
20 that via cell phone or radio or -- you know, when you -- go  
21 ahead.

22 A. We did -- I used both. I had my Nextel Direct  
23 Connect. I was in -- it would be one of our paramedics from  
24 down in the Elbe (ph.) area. He called me. He runs a life  
25 flight program down there for Lifeguard 12. He called me via

1 Nextel and he had people and helicopters ready, and I told him  
2 to send them and they came. So I did use my Nextel, and most  
3 of it was done with radios.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. Our Fire Ops, Warren County Fire Alert Frequency.

6 Q. Did you have a safety officer on scene?

7 A. You know, I don't think I did. I did have one guy  
8 going around doing rehab and checking things and stuff, if you  
9 would classify him as a safety officer, but probably not, no.

10 Q. Okay. So, so when the personnel came on the scene,  
11 what general instructions did you end up giving the personnel?

12 A. Pretty much -- I was dealing with the EMS personnel  
13 to, you know, treat the people, take care of them, you know,  
14 make sure that they were, you know, attended to. We did talk  
15 with -- early on in the scenario, in that situation, we talked  
16 to the doctor, to Glen Falls Hospital, which we had called, our  
17 EMS people had called to let them know to get ready for X  
18 number of people, and we spoke with the doctor, Dr. Kapell  
19 (ph.), I guess it was, our -- Billy Suffolk (ph.), my guy from  
20 Empire who was doing kind of the triage of the deceased people  
21 there, and told him what we had and so we did as per his  
22 instruction as to checking for pulse, see if there's  
23 (indiscernible) systolic and two leads which is our protocol --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- and if they're not viable, then move onto the next

1 patients, you know, so we could take care of saving the people  
2 that were salvageable. So that's pretty much what we did from  
3 then.

4 Q. Okay. Now with triage, when you actually separated  
5 the people, what particular sites did you end up using or was  
6 it one site and then having something to separate the walking  
7 from the wounded or the, the fatalities?

8 A. Yes, we did. When they came in, I kept all of the --  
9 as you're looking from the Lake there, there's two sets of  
10 docks. One dock on the right, one dock on the left. The dock  
11 on the right where they were coming and bringing the deceased  
12 people, we kept them in one area, and all the people who were  
13 still viable, we kept them on the dock to the left, and kept  
14 them completely separated. It was probably, you know, between  
15 the two places a good, I'm going to say 50 yards probably, and  
16 they're up out of the way and we put up a, I erected a barrier  
17 with tarps to seal off the area where the deceased were so they  
18 couldn't be seen from where the other people were sitting. We  
19 were blocking them off. I thought that was the best way to  
20 keep some of the stress down and try and keep some control of a  
21 really chaotic situation.

22 Q. Right. Now as far as being able to reach those  
23 docks, is it easy access for an ambulance or difficult or can  
24 you explain?

25 A. Well, it's, as I say, at the scene, there was a one

1 road in and one road out, a place with a very narrow little  
2 road but that's why -- the ambulances were able to come in,  
3 back in, pick up the patients that we took to the hospital and  
4 leave without a problem. That worked out pretty well as long  
5 as, you know, there's one in and one out, and so, yeah, that  
6 worked pretty well. And we didn't have a bottleneck of traffic  
7 around the area to contend with as far as getting the people  
8 out. So that went very well.

9 Q. Okay. And then where did the ambulance stage again?

10 A. Most of the ambulances staged up on -- when they  
11 first came in, they were up on 9N, and then I believe they moved  
12 down to Trinity Rock Road and staged them there, and just  
13 brought them in as they needed them.

14 Q. Okay. As far as the commute between Trinity Rock  
15 Road and the hospital, how far is that as far as distance and  
16 time? Do you know?

17 A. I would say it's probably approximately I'm going to  
18 say 20 miles, approximately about a 15 minute ride, 15 to 20  
19 minute ride, depending on, you know, traffic and such, but I  
20 would say probably 15 anyway.

21 Q. Okay. And then the first three people that were in  
22 trauma arrest, and then followed by the four, they were all  
23 brought by personal watercraft or official boats?

24 A. Some were brought in by the Sheriff's Department and  
25 some were brought in by personal watercraft. Yeah, they were

1 just coming, let's say fast, very, very quickly by private  
2 boats and some Sheriff's Department boats and some Lake George  
3 Park Commission boats.

4 Q. Okay. So the emergency room was pretty much aware of  
5 that they were going to have to deal with a large incident?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. They, they were informed early on. One of the EMS  
9 officers called the hospital and told them, you know, what was  
10 going on, what we had. So they went to I guess what they call  
11 a Code Yellow at the hospital.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. And they had, you know, all the doctors ready, the  
14 nurses, they had cleared the ER. They were, you know, prepared  
15 for a big influx of people.

16 Q. Okay. Let me see. Have you had a debriefing yet or  
17 critique of how this incident evolved?

18 A. We ourselves, all the departments that were involved  
19 and agencies that were involved, yes, we did a debriefing just  
20 to try and figure out what we did right, what we did wrong, see  
21 what we could learn from this, and so if and when it ever  
22 happens again, we'll maybe be better prepared. I don't know  
23 how you can really prepare for something like this, you know,  
24 as much training as you want to do but, yes, we did do a couple  
25 of debriefings amongst ourselves. I had the critical stress

1 team there the day of the event so all my guys when we got back  
2 to the fire station, I checked everybody there, didn't let  
3 anybody go home, and we talked for those guys for an hour or  
4 so, and did some debriefing on that end also. So it kind of  
5 worked out pretty well that way.

6 Q. Okay. Do you remember or do you recall how many  
7 units were on scene on the initial -- well, aside from the two  
8 ambulances that were already waiting there but --

9 A. Right. Total, we had total -- on first initial, we  
10 had our own ambulance and I believe one or two from Empire. At  
11 the end of the whole scenario, we had a total of 13 agencies  
12 there involved with the transport of patients and dive units  
13 and such. So we had 13, 13 agencies there.

14 Q. Okay. Now the actual Marine Rescue 1. Did they  
15 actually retrieve passengers out of the water?

16 A. I believe they brought -- they did retrieve I  
17 think -- I don't think they had any viable people but they  
18 were, you know, they did bring in some deceased people, yes.

19 Q. Okay. All right.

20 A. Which by the way they were doing CPR on also, trying  
21 to, you know, trying to revive those folks.

22 Q. Right. So as far as the Incident Commander, can you  
23 tell me a little bit more about that or explain to me exactly  
24 how that works?

25 A. Well, Incident Commander, you know, they have to come



1 in, size up the scene, take a look around, check for any real  
2 hazards, you know, anything, you know, because our number one  
3 rule is to protect yourself before you can help anybody else,  
4 and you just kind of take charge of the scene and what you  
5 have, and start delegating authority out to different people  
6 and then those people report back to you as to, you know, what  
7 they've done, what's going on, what they need, what they don't  
8 need and, you know, most of the time, the guy that I delegated  
9 the authorities to, to do things, always come back and get  
10 face-to-face with me, to let me know what was going on, what  
11 they had done and -- well, what's going on. So it's just -- we  
12 do this all the time on our fire calls or any kind of a call.  
13 We always use our Incident Command System. So we're always  
14 used to it, and it works. You know, for the scene we had, I  
15 think our job went very well. Everybody did a great job.  
16 Everybody did their work. They did it without question and if  
17 they needed something, they would call me, and I would get it  
18 for them or they would call and get it themselves. It worked  
19 very well. So the Incident Command System kind of takes the --  
20 as somebody told me many years ago, someone has to be in  
21 charge, and when somebody's in charge, you don't -- you get  
22 away from the chaos and confusion and that's basically what we  
23 did there. Like I say, I was -- I'm Chief. It's my fire  
24 district. That's my job. That's what I had to do. So I go  
25 and do it to the best of my ability.

1           Q.    Right.  And how many -- I don't know, do you want to  
2   call them individual leaders then for each particular unit,  
3   like a triage unit or a treatment unit or whatever.  Then how  
4   many, how many people did you have report to you then?

5           A.    I had like three.  I had, you know, the one gentlemen  
6   that was the EMS coordinator and his assistant that he chose  
7   and one other assistant.  He had three people.  He had two  
8   other people working with him.  So, yes, they all would come  
9   back and report back to me, and I checked with my fire police  
10  who was up on 9N, you know, every once in a while he would call  
11  me, and then also we had the landing zone coordinator.  That  
12  was his job to report back to me when the helicopters arrived.  
13  If we needed them, what we needed off the helicopters.  So  
14  everybody, like I say, it worked out real well.  The landing  
15  zone people did a great job, and we had room for -- I think at  
16  one time we had five helicopters here waiting and, of course,  
17  we didn't need them, but in case we did, they were there.

18          Q.    Did they do any searches at all of Lake George or  
19  were they just standby, the helicopters?

20          A.    They come and just pretty much did standby for  
21  patient care.  No, they didn't do any aerial searches.  One  
22  might have come in and made a couple of circles.  I'm not  
23  really sure but I don't remember them doing any air  
24  surveillance at all, no.

25          Q.    Okay.  Where was the LZ?

1           A.    The LZ was set up at Green Harbor Beach --

2           Q.    Okay.

3           A.    -- just a short ways from us.

4           Q.    And did it come from all different counties or  
5 jurisdictions?

6           A.    Well, from what I understand, we had Albany Med  
7 Flight out of Albany. We had Lifeguard 12, let me think, two  
8 or three Lifeguard 12s, State Police helicopters, one came out  
9 of, as I understand, Plattsburgh, up that way. This is what I  
10 was told later. I'm not really sure. But there was, you know,  
11 I think there was at least five there at one time, and then  
12 when they left, the State Police Superintendent and his people  
13 came in their helicopters. So like I said, as far as I know,  
14 the Lifeguard 12 and the Albany Med Flights, and I believe one  
15 from Plattsburgh I think.

16          Q.    Okay. And the fire, can you tell me about him?

17          A.    Who was that?

18          Q.    You said you have an EMS coordinator, right?

19          A.    Uh-huh. Yeah.

20          Q.    And the LZ coordinator. And who was the third  
21 coordinator?

22          A.    Fire police.

23          Q.    Okay. Fire police. Okay.

24          A.    Yeah.

25          Q.    And how many units did they have or equipment?

1           A.    The fire police was just one gentleman by himself up  
2   on 9N, and he was able to handle that pretty well up there as  
3   far as directing traffic in and out and around.  So he didn't  
4   have a problem with that.  Other than that, the EMS people,  
5   they just did pretty much their work with the ambulances,  
6   bringing them in and getting people loaded and on their way to  
7   the hospitals.

8           Q.    Okay.  Okay.  Now as far as your run sheet, would you  
9   be able to send me a copy of that and also your protocols in  
10  regards to incident command and initial size up and stuff?

11          A.    I could probably get you a copy of our run sheet,  
12  yeah, I probably could do that, yeah.

13          Q.    Okay.  Okay.

14                MS. BURER:  Major Rivenburgh, do you have any  
15  questions?

16                MAJOR RIVENBURGH:  Yes.

17                BY MAJOR RIVENBURGH:

18          Q.    Chief --

19          A.    Yes.

20          Q.    -- how many years in the fire service?

21          A.    I've been in the fire service approximately 18.

22          Q.    Eighteen?

23          A.    Yes.

24          Q.    Okay.  What type of training have you had?

25          A.    I've done incident command.  I've done hazmat,

1 missile attack, oh, boy, quite a few.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I've had lots of training.

4 Q. Okay. What's your training for on the EMT side of  
5 the house, EMS side of the house?

6 A. EMS-wise, myself, personally I made level 3, critical  
7 care tech, and so I've been doing that for approximately 10  
8 years.

9 Q. Equally qualified for that position, huh?

10 A. Yes. I would say, yes.

11 Q. How many times a year do you train with other  
12 agencies for major events?

13 A. We do mutual aid drills probably once or twice a  
14 year. We do it with Bolton. We do it with North Beach, and  
15 plus our own in-house training.

16 Q. Uh-huh. And do you believe it was beneficial?

17 A. Oh, definitely.

18 Q. Okay. How many major events do you have a year?

19 A. Well, this year we've had four. We've had the boat,  
20 the Ethan Allen accident. We had another incident back in June  
21 with a lad who decided to put his boat up on the island. We  
22 wound up with approximately I think to 8 to 10 patients that  
23 night. We had another incident up on one of the motels, where  
24 somebody decided to discharge a can of pepper spray into a  
25 fire, and we wound up taking 13 people to the hospital that

1 night with breathing problems. And one other incident we had  
2 was over at North Queensbury District, where a boat flipped  
3 over where 13 people were in the water. Fortunately everyone  
4 was accounted for, and nobody was hurt, and everybody got out  
5 okay. So, yeah, we've had like four this summer in all, which  
6 is very, very unusual. But like I say, that does happen, and  
7 each one worked great. I mean we worked our system that I  
8 talked to the other lady about, our Incident Command System,  
9 and it worked very well.

10 Q. Okay. Who is the EMS Coordinator Car 2? His name?

11 A. His name is Chris Norton (ph.).

12 Q. And we can reach him through Warren County?

13 A. Yes, yes, you would.

14 Q. Okay. The, the ambulance in Lake George, that comes  
15 out of your fire station?

16 A. It comes out of -- fire and EMS are two separate  
17 entities.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Lake George Emergency Squad and Lake George Fire  
20 Department are two completely different operations.

21 Q. Okay. But --

22 A. To the best of my knowledge, yes.

23 Q. Okay. But in an incident like this, they fall under  
24 your command?

25 A. Yes.

1           Q.    Okay.  That's the same way it is for me down in  
2 Middleburg.  I'm checking on that end of it.

3           A.    Yeah.

4           Q.    Do you drill with them on a routine basis?

5           A.    Yes, we do because most of us are -- when we're not  
6 riding with the fire department, we're riding with the  
7 emergency squad.  So we kind of cross-train all the time, you  
8 know.  What we learn at the fire service we take to the squad  
9 and vice versa, you know, so in a small area like this, most of  
10 the guys that are volunteers, they're also involved with the  
11 EMS.

12          Q.    So you're wearing at least two hats?

13          A.    Yes.

14          Q.    Okay.  Any shortcomings to the system, to the ICS  
15 system that you may have experienced during this incident?

16          A.    No, not really.  Like I say, you know, it's -- no, I  
17 don't think so.  I'm sure there's always something we can pick  
18 up and learn from and maybe we can change but, no, I don't  
19 think so.  I think everything worked out -- that participate  
20 day worked out very well.  Like I said, we had good  
21 communications with each other, face-to-face with each other,  
22 and I think everything worked real good that day.  Everybody  
23 stayed calm and in command and stayed cool and did their jobs.

24          Q.    Okay.  Did you -- is there anything out of this  
25 incident that would be something you'd want to pass onto other

1 agencies, any part of this?

2 A. I -- the only thing I can say is keep your Incident  
3 Command System intact and make it work for you. It'll make  
4 your life a lot easier and, you know, accountability is so  
5 important in an incident of that size, where your people are,  
6 the people that you have extricated, whatever and, you know,  
7 where their location of where they've gone to. So, you know,  
8 accountability, definitely an accountability thing. So you can  
9 account for all of your people and all the people that are  
10 involved in the incident. I think that's -- if they can get  
11 all systems to do that, then I think that's a real positive.

12 Q. Yeah. You did mention early confusion regarding the  
13 number of victims in the water. How did you rectify that?

14 A. Well, like I say, sometimes the dispatchers and  
15 sometimes even yourself, you get, you know, a little -- the  
16 adrenaline gets pumping and you're not really hearing what you  
17 think you're hearing. So that's why I always like to call back  
18 the County and confirm because the first time I thought he had  
19 said 15, and that's when I called, in route to the scene, I  
20 called them back and asked to confirm the number of patients,  
21 and they told me 50, 5 0. So, you know, I always like to do  
22 that, and recheck just to make sure so I know what's going on,  
23 what the score is.

24 Q. Okay. Towards the end of the incident, early on  
25 towards the end, if you can understand where I'm going with



1 this, how did you -- how were you able to determine how many  
2 persons on board and if you had accounted for everyone?

3 A. Well, we just -- early on, I tried -- when the  
4 Sheriff got there, I wanted to get some kind of a manifest from  
5 the tour operator or from somebody, so we could have an  
6 accurate account exactly, because we had conflicting reports.  
7 We have 50, we had 47, we had 46, we had 49 with the captain,  
8 you know. So the numbers were constantly changing. Until we  
9 had something concrete which, like I say, I wanted to get from  
10 the tour director or the bus people or somebody, so we would  
11 have an accurate amount or count of just who was on that vessel  
12 that day. And that finally did filter down through to us, and  
13 we did find -- we were thinking there might have been -- 46  
14 plus the captain made 47, and then when the Sheriff's  
15 Department dive team was out, going for evidence, the  
16 recording, whatever, then they happened to find the other lady  
17 who was wedged up underneath the seats there, which made for  
18 the 20th victim.

19 Q. Uh-huh.

20 A. So that, you know, it was, like I say, it was kind of  
21 confusing for a while until we finally got something concrete  
22 that we could say, well, this is what we're supposed to have  
23 here, and a lot of people were wearing name tags. Some had  
24 lost them but, you know, it gave us some kind of idea for a  
25 head count.

1           Q.    Okay.  Were you able to get any information from  
2   Shoreline Tours regarding Manifests and --

3           A.    Just the lady that was there.  She gave us what she  
4   thought was her number and they had the manifest I believe was  
5   at -- either at the boat -- not at the boat -- on their bus or  
6   somewhere back at Shoreline Cruises.  I'm not really sure.  It  
7   wasn't on the scene until later on in the game.

8           Q.    Okay.  So you were -- you were pretty much going  
9   based on what the tour people had, not what Shoreline put on  
10  board?

11          A.    Right.

12          Q.    Okay.

13          A.    Exactly.

14          Q.    Okay.  And we're looking -- I'm with the Office of  
15  Parks, and that's one of the areas that we are looking at --

16          A.    Okay.

17          Q.    -- to make it easier for emergency responders to have  
18  a better idea of how many people are on board.

19          A.    Yeah, because that was one of my main concerns, not  
20  just for -- of course, to get all the people but for my guys,  
21  you know, diving in that amount of water, like I only had like  
22  three divers there, three tenders, for that particular  
23  operation.  They can only make two dives, at that depth.  
24  That's why I wanted -- I needed -- wanted to make sure I had  
25  enough resources there, for other divers coming in to relieve

1 those guys so we could keep the operation going, until  
2 everybody was accounted for.

3 Q. Okay. Any equipment that you didn't have that you  
4 wished you had?

5 A. No, we had pretty much everything that we needed. We  
6 had -- we call all of our extra dive gear on the boat, and --  
7 no, I think equipment-wise, I think we were in pretty good  
8 shape. We had plenty of EMS supplies, plenty of stretchers,  
9 backboards, everything we needed. So I think we were in pretty  
10 good shape in that respect.

11 Q. Okay. I can't think of any further question for my  
12 part.

13 MAJOR RIVENBURGH: Mariette.

14 MS. BURER: Yeah.

15 BY MS. BURER:

16 Q. I guess because of this conversation that I'm  
17 listening to, I was actually wondering now about the  
18 accountability of your own personnel, you know. We just  
19 finished talking about accountability of the passengers, but  
20 how did you keep track of your own people?

21 A. Well, I, I had -- one of my officers was out on  
22 Marine Rescue 1, and he had -- I was in constant radio  
23 communications with him as far as my divers, my tenders and all  
24 my people out there. So he kept track of that for me, and then  
25 the people that I had on the land, I was able to physically see

1    them all the time.  So we were in pretty good shape for that in  
2    that respect.

3           Q.    And then how did you feel about ambulances that were  
4    coming and going?  Did you feel that you had -- you knew who  
5    was still in the staging area or who was actually loading up  
6    and who actually was going towards the hospital or --

7           A.    Yes.  That was all -- like I said, our EMS command,  
8    Car 2, Chris Norton, he, he took care of all that.  So he knew  
9    what buses he had lined up and he knew what -- who went on what  
10   ambulance to the hospital.  So I think he's probably got  
11   records to that effect.

12          Q.    Okay.  How often did the coordinators have to check  
13   in with you?  Did you set time like -- for them to call back in  
14   with you?

15          A.    No, he would come back every 5 or 10 minutes and tell  
16   me what he had done and what was going on.  So we kept in  
17   pretty good time.  I would say 5 or 10 minutes, he would come  
18   back and him or one of his assistants would come and say, okay,  
19   this is what we've done, here's what we've got, here's where  
20   we're moving out, you know, and then they would go back to  
21   doing another -- their tasks again and so we kept pretty good  
22   communications that way.  It was, you know, very -- I would  
23   say, you know, maybe 10 minutes, 15 minutes a part.

24          Q.    Right.  Do you know what the 911 protocols are for a  
25   water accident that happens in Lake George?

1           A.    Most of the time, we're automatic dispatch because we  
2   have the county dive team.

3           Q.    Okay.

4           A.    We're part of the county system, and they just  
5   automatically dispatch us to any water related incident being  
6   on Lake George or be it on Spoon Lake or in the county.  So  
7   we're pretty much automatic dispatch, and then they  
8   automatically dispatch North Queensbury and Bolton for their  
9   boats and Horicon for their dive teams.  So it's kind of a, you  
10   know, they're an automatic thing.

11          Q.    Okay.  All right.

12                MS. BURER:  I'm okay for right now.  Major  
13   Rivenburgh, do you have any more questions?

14                MAJOR RIVENBURGH:  No, I'm set here.

15                MS. BURER:  Okay.  Chief Kilburn, what I would like  
16   to do is go ahead and conclude this record, and then please  
17   stay on the line so I can ask you some personal information.

18                CHIEF KILBURN:  Okay.

19                MS. BURER:  Okay.  So I'm going to stop this  
20   recording.

21                (Whereupon, at 2:00 p.m., the interview in the above-  
22   entitled matter was concluded.)

23

24

25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:            Investigation of MV Ethan Allen  
                                 Lake George, New York  
                                 October 2, 2005  
                                 Interview of Bruce Kilburn

DOCKET NUMBER:            DCA 06 MM 001

PLACE:                      Washington, D.C.

DATE:                        October 18, 2005

was held according to the record, and that this is the  
original, complete, true and accurate transcript which has been  
compared to the recording accomplished at the hearing.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathryn A. Mirfin  
Transcriber